

Ty Aion, Ffordd Bedwas  
Bedwas, Caerffili,  
CF83 8WT  
029 2085 9696

Ty Aion, Bedwas Road  
Bedwas, Caerphilly  
CF83 8WT  
[www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk)

Cyngor Cymru Adysg  
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# Cylchlythyr | Circular

## Unistats: timetable and arrangements for 2019

**Date:** 02 May 2019  
**Reference:** W19/12HE  
**To:** Heads of higher education institutions in Wales  
Principals of directly-funded further education colleges in Wales  
**Response by:** No response required  
**Contact:** Name: Savanna Jones  
Telephone: 029 2085 9737  
Email: [savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk)

This circular presents arrangements for the collection of the 2019 Unistats data. It also provides an update on the development of a new information that will replace Unistats.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email [info@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:info@hefcw.ac.uk).



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## **Introduction**

1. The replacement for the Unistats website is currently under development. In the interim this data will continue to be recognised as the Unistats collection of data in 2019.

## **Provider requirements**

2. The following providers are required to return Unistats data:
  - Regulated and funded providers in Wales
  - Providers in England that are registered with the Office for Students
  - Publicly-funded providers in Northern Ireland and Scotland.
3. Data should be returned for eligible courses delivered directly by the provider or by other providers on its behalf through sub-contractual arrangements. Eligible courses are defined in the coverage of the Unistats record on the Higher Education Statistics agency (HESA) website.<sup>1</sup>

## **Process for submission and sign-off of data**

4. All regulated and funded higher education providers in Wales should return their Unistats data to HESA. Guidance is available on the HESA website.<sup>2</sup>
5. Guidance on returns for sub-contracted provision is also available on the HESA website.<sup>3</sup>
6. The submission timetable for 2019 Unistats data is available at Table 1. To ensure that data remains accurate, it is possible to resubmit data throughout the year to reflect changes in course details or website changes. An updated dataset is published every Wednesday following the initial publication.
7. Data must pass a series of institutional system validation checks before it can be submitted and signed-off as accurate. All stages of the process must be completed, or data is not considered to be received and therefore will not be published.
8. The data should be signed off by the provider's accountable officer, however, formal responsibility to sign off subsequent updates can be delegated to another member of the senior management team. If the accountable officer is not in a position to sign off the initial return, this should be conducted by the individual acting in that capacity at that time. HESA should also be notified in advance of this change.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061/coverage](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061/coverage)

<sup>2</sup> [www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061)

<sup>3</sup> [www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061/coverage](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c19061/coverage)

9. Data from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey will continue to be used in the 2019 Unistats dataset. A solution will be developed for its replacement in 2020, when we expect to begin publishing data from the Graduate Outcomes Survey. The DLHE data that we will use in 2019 is the same as that used in the 2018 dataset. It will be available in the system and visible in reports from the point at which the collection system opens.
10. The intended publication date for the dataset will be confirmed in July 2019.

**Table 1: Key dates**

Date	Activity	Notes
24 May 2019	Collection systems open	
10 July 2019	Addition of NSS data	NSS data will be added to the data collection systems and will be visible in reports.
25 July 2019	Deadline for submission of valid dataset	Providers are required to have submitted a dataset which passes validation and contains the majority of their courses.
16 August 2019	Sign off deadline	Providers are required to have signed off as an accurate dataset which has passed system validation and is suitable for publication.

### **Changes to the collection and data updates**

11. We have identified that prospective students require easier access to information about tuition fees and any additional costs that a student might incur in connection with their course. We would prefer to meet this need by providing direct links to this information on provider webpages, as institutions should already be publishing it to meet their obligations under consumer law. Therefore, this year there is a new url field<sup>4</sup> to capture a link to information about course costs in provider webpages.
12. In June Unistats will be updated with Year 4 Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) ratings for participating providers.

### **Development of a new information resource**

13. The UK funders and regulators are working to develop a replacement for the Unistats website. Progression to the beta phase of the project has been approved. This will include a programme of user research, development and testing with the intention of releasing a beta version of

<sup>4</sup> Data items CRSECSTURL (English webpage) and CRSECSTURLW (Welsh webpage)

the new website in September 2019, on which the 2019 Unistats data will be published.

14. The new website will have a particular focus on supporting those students who are less supported with information, advice and guidance. By helping prospective students to understand more about higher education and encouraging them to reflect on what is important to them, we can signpost them to make the best decision for them about whether to go into higher education, and what and where to study.
15. The UK funders and regulators do not intend to make extensive changes to data outputs for 2019, but will be carrying out user research to develop presentations of existing datasets to ensure they are easily understandable without over-simplifying the data. The research will inform publications of data from 2020, when a different approach may be adopted. We will inform providers of any changes we intend to make for 2019 in July.
16. We will develop a replacement for the Unistats widget to coincide with the replacement of the website and will publish guidance on its implementation in July 2019. As is the case with the current widget, it will provide a direct link to data about the course from the providers' course pages. The deadline for its implementation and removal of the current widget, will be 27 September 2019.

### **Further information / responses to**

17. For further information, contact Savanna Jones (029 2085 9737; [savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:savanna.jones@hefcw.ac.uk)). For Unistats queries contact details at OfS, contact Rose Spicer (0117 931 7148, [unistats@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:unistats@officeforstudents.org.uk)). Access to the HESA data collection is managed through the HESA Identity System.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [www.hesa.ac.uk/support/user-guides/idsguide](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/user-guides/idsguide)